

Memorandum

Date : January 10, 2018

To : County Probation
Local stakeholders
Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC)

Subject: **IMPLEMENTATION OF SB 625, HONORABLE DISCHARGE**

As you may be aware, Senate Bill 625, signed into law in fall 2017, restores the ability of youth formerly committed to the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to receive an honorable discharge by the Board of Juvenile Hearings (BJH).

The intent of SB 625 is to serve as an incentive for youth to participate in treatment while in DJJ, and to reward those youth who have completed probation, avoided re-offending, and pursued productive and engaged roles as members of society. An honorable discharge may be cited and recognized by courts as evidence of rehabilitation. SB 625 allows former DJJ youth to petition the BJH for an honorable discharge once he or she has successfully completed probation supervision and it has been at least 18 months since the date of discharge.

Before the Board can begin accepting petitions for honorable discharges, regulations, policies and procedures to establish the process and criteria will need to be developed and approved. The BJH is also drafting information sheets for current and former DJJ youth regarding the honorable discharge process, and is setting up a website that will provide additional information. The development of the Board's regulations and policies will involve ongoing collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, including probation officials, community organizations and the public, and will be completed as quickly as possible.

SB 625 also makes several requirements of counties. The county probation departments are required to:

- inform former DJJ youth *currently or previously* under its supervision about the opportunity and process of petitioning the BJH for an honorable discharge. Please note that this is also a requirement of the BJH, and as such the Board will provide written notice to youth upon discharge from DJJ of the honorable discharge requirements as well;
- send a letter regarding the opportunity and process of petitioning the BJH for an honorable discharge to the last known residence of a person previously under the supervision of the county of commitment. The Board is developing a template for this letter for counties to send to former DJJ youth which will outline the eligibility criteria, process to petition for an honorable discharge, and other relevant information; and
- provide a summary report to BJH of the petitioner's performance while on probation, *after* the youth has petitioned for an honorable discharge. [WIC §1178(a) – (c)]

The BJH is working closely with county probation departments through CPOC, and will keep you informed regarding the implementation process and schedule as our regulations evolve and develop. In the interim, if you have questions about honorable discharges, please contact the Board at 916-683-7479. I can also be reached at rachel.stern@cdcr.ca.gov.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'R. Stern', written in dark ink.

RACHEL STERN

Executive Officer, Board of Juvenile Hearings

Division of Juvenile Justice

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation